

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An image forming apparatus which is connected to a network and forms an image on the basis of image data acquired from the network, comprising:
 - 5 input means for inputting information that pertains to image data;
 - submission means for submitting an image request to the network on the basis of the information input by said input means;
 - 10 storage means for storing image data sent in response to the image request submitted by said submission means;
 - image processing means for controlling to execute an image process corresponding to a type of image data
 - 15 stored in said storage means; and
 - image forming means for forming an image on the basis of the image data processed by said image processing means.
- 20 2. The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said submission means submits the image request using a URL.
3. The apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising a server which stores the image data and is connected to the network, and wherein said submission means submits a URL including an address of the server.

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4. The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said image processing means changes an image process for the image data on the basis of whether an image
5 corresponding to the image data requires tone reproduction or resolution.
5. The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said input means includes a control panel provided to said
10 image forming apparatus.
6. The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said input means includes interface means for inputting via the network a command input at a computer connected to
15 the network.
7. The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said image processing means determines a characteristic of the image data on the basis of an extension included in
20 a file name of the image data.
8. The apparatus according to claim 3, wherein said image processing means determines a characteristic of the image data on the basis of a reply from said server.

9. The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the
image process includes at least some of a LOG
conversion process, undercolor removal process,
pulse-width modulation process, gamma conversion
process, and binarization process.

10. An image forming method in an image forming
apparatus which is connected to a network and forms an
image on the basis of image data acquired from the
network, comprising:

an input step of inputting information that
pertains to image data;

a submission step of submitting an image request
to the network on the basis of the information input in
said input step;

a storage step of storing in a memory image data
sent in response to the image request submitted in said
submission step;

an image processing step of controlling to
execute an image process corresponding to a type of
image data stored in the memory; and

an image forming step of forming an image on the
basis of the image data processed in said image
processing step.

11. The method according to claim 10, wherein said submission step includes a step of submitting the image request using a URL.

5 12. The method according to claim 10, wherein the image data is stored in a server which is connected to the network, and said submission step includes a step of submitting a URL including an address of the server.

10 13. The method according to claim 10, wherein said image processing step includes a step of changing the image process for the image data on the basis of whether an image corresponding to the image data requires tone reproduction or resolution.

15 14. The method according to claim 10, wherein in said input step, data is input from a control panel provided to said image forming apparatus.

20 15. The method according to claim 10, wherein in said input step, a command input at a computer connected to the network is input via the network.

25 16. The method according to claim 10, wherein said image processing step includes a step of determining a

characteristic of the image data on the basis of an extension included in a file name of the image data.

17. The method according to claim 12, wherein said
5 image processing step includes a step of determining a characteristic of the image data on the basis of a reply from the server.

18. The method according to claim 10, wherein the
10 image process includes at least some of a LOG conversion process, undercolor removal process, pulse-width modulation process, gamma conversion process, and binarization process.

15 19. An image forming apparatus comprising:
data acquisition means for accessing individual servers on a network, and parallelly acquiring data from the individual servers;
image data generation means for generating image formation data on the basis of data acquired by said data acquisition means;
image forming means for forming an image on the basis of the image formation data generated by said image data generation means; and
20 25 control means for controlling said image data generation means to generate image formation data and

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said image forming means to form an image in turn from data, which has been acquired by said data acquisition means.

5 20. The apparatus according to claim 19, wherein when data on a server includes location information which indicates locations where sub data as building components of the data are held, all sub data designated by the location information included in the
10 data from the server are acquired by said data acquisition means, and generation of the image formation data by said image data generation means and image formation by said image forming means are started from data for which all data including the sub data
15 have been acquired.

21. The apparatus according to claim 19, further comprising:

 timer means for measuring time required until
20 completion of acquisition of data from the server;
 setting means for setting a wait time; and
 cancel means for canceling data acquisition from the server when a value measured by said timer means exceeds a predetermined time.
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22. An image forming apparatus comprising:

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data acquisition means for accessing individual servers on a network, and parallelly acquiring data from the individual servers;

image data generation means for generating image
5 formation data corresponding to each server on the basis of data acquired from the server by said data acquisition means;

image forming means for forming an image on the basis of the image formation data generated by said
10 image data generation means; and

control means for controlling said image forming means to form an image in turn from image formation data, which has been generated by said image data generation means.

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23. The apparatus according to claim 22, further comprising:

timer means for measuring time required until completion of acquisition of data from the server;

20 setting means for setting a wait time; and

cancel means for canceling data acquisition from the server when a value measured by said timer means exceeds a predetermined time.

25 24. An image forming method comprising:

a data acquisition step of accessing individual servers on a network, and parallelly acquiring data from the individual servers;

5 an image data generation step of generating image formation data on the basis of data acquired in said data acquisition step;

an image forming step of forming an image on the basis of the image formation data generated in said image data generation step; and

10 a control step of controlling said image data generation step to generate image formation data and said image forming step to form an image in turn from data, which has been acquired in said data acquisition step.

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25. The method according to claim 24, wherein when data on the server includes location information which indicates locations where sub data as building components of the data are held, all sub data 20 designated by the location information included in the data from the server are acquired in said data acquisition step, and generation of the image formation data and image formation are started from data for which all data including the sub data have been 25 acquired.

26. The method according to claim 24, further comprising:

a time measurement step of measuring time required until completion of acquisition of data from
5 the server;

a setting step of setting a wait time; and
a cancel step of canceling data acquisition from the server when a value measured in said time measurement step exceeds a predetermined time.

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27. An image forming method comprising:

a data acquisition step of accessing individual servers on a network, and parallelly acquiring data from the individual servers;

15 an image data generation step of generating image formation data corresponding to each server on the basis of data acquired from the server in said data acquisition step;

20 an image forming step of forming an image on the basis of the image formation data generated in said image data generation step; and

25 a control step of controlling said image forming step to form an image in turn from image formation data, which has been generated in said image data generation step.

28. The method according to claim 27, further comprising:

a time measurement step of measuring time required until completion of acquisition of data from
5 the server;

a setting step of setting a wait time; and
a cancel step of canceling data acquisition from the server when a value measured in said time measurement step exceeds a predetermined time.

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29. A storage medium which stores a program for implementing an image forming method in an image forming apparatus which is connected to a network and forms an image on the basis of image data acquired from
15 the network, comprising:

an input step module for inputting information that pertains to image data;

a submission module for submitting an image request to the network on the basis of the information
20 input in said input step module;

a storage step module of storing in a memory image data sent in response to the image request submitted in said submission step module;

25 an image processing step module of controlling to execute an image process corresponding to a type of image data stored in the memory; and

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an image forming step module of forming an image on the basis of the image data processed in said image processing step module.

- 5 30. A storage medium which stores a program for implementing an image forming method comprising:
- a data acquisition step module of accessing individual servers on a network, and parallelly acquiring data from the individual servers;
- 10 an image data generation step module of generating image formation data on the basis of data acquired in said data acquisition step module;
- an image forming step module of forming an image on the basis of the image formation data generated in
- 15 said image data generation step module; and
- a control step module of controlling said image data generation step module to generate image formation data and said image forming step module to form an image in turn from data, which has been acquired in
- 20 said data acquisition step module.
31. A storage medium which stores a program for implementing an image forming method comprising:
- a data acquisition step module of accessing individual servers on a network, and parallelly acquiring data from the individual servers;

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- an image data generation step module of generating image formation data corresponding to each server on the basis of data acquired from the server in said data acquisition step module;
 - 5 an image forming step module of forming an image on the basis of the image formation data generated in said image data generation step module; and
 - a control step module of controlling said image forming step module to form an image in turn from image formation data, which has been generated in said image data generation step module.